

**Tewksbury School Committee**  
Wednesday, March 13, 2024  
Regular School Committee Meeting #10, 5:00 PM  
Tewksbury Memorial High School  
Large Group Instruction Room #1  
320 Pleasant Street, Tewksbury, MA 01876

**SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT**

Bridget Garabedian, Chair  
Kayla Biagioni-Smith, Vice-Chair  
Kaitlyn Anderson, Clerk  
Richard Russo, Jr., Member  
Nicholas Parsons, Member

**SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT**

Brenda Theriault-Regan, Superintendent  
Lori McDermott, Assistant Superintendent  
David Libby, Business Manager

**CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. Garabedian opened the FY25 Budget Hearing at 5:00 p.m. reporting that this is the third presentation of the FY25 Budget for the School Committee.

**PUBLIC HEARING ON THE FY25 BUDGET**

Mr. Libby reported that the budget process begins in October and our needs and resources are constantly changing. The final budget will reflect the changes when presented in May. Mr. Libby gave the FY25 Budget presentation reporting that the overall school budget would be a 3.09% increase. Salaries represent 71.3% of the school budget; Operating is 27% of the budget, and Capital Outlay is 1.5% of the budget. Our Salaries are \$40,144,578, Operating Costs are \$15,396,530 and the Capital Outlay is \$789,603, totaling \$56,330,710. Our budget is in-line with the Town Manager's recommended budget.

The budget information details may be found on the district website at <https://www.tewksbury.k12.ma.us/departments-programs/business-office/>. Mr. Libby responded to questions and comments from the School Committee. The Public Hearing on the FY25 Budget presentation concluded at 5:40 p.m.

Mr. Russo moved to adjourn the Public Hearing on the FY25 Budget, seconded by Ms. Biagioni-Smith. All Aye. Unanimous Vote. Motion carried 5-0.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 5:42 p.m., Ms. Garabedian entertained a motion to convene an Executive Session, Mr. Russo moved, seconded by Ms. Biagioni-Smith, to enter into the Executive Session to discuss the February 14, 2024 Executive Session minutes; and to discuss Collective Bargaining pertaining to the TTA (teachers). The Committee will reconvene in open session following the Executive Session at 6:30 PM.

Roll Call Vote - Voting Yes: Mr. Parsons, Mr. Russo, Ms. Anderson, Ms. Biagioni-Smith and Ms. Garabedian. All Aye. Unanimous Vote. Motion carried 5-0.

At 6:11 p.m., Ms. Garabedian entertained a motion to adjourn the Executive Session. Ms. Biagioni-Smith moved, seconded by Mr. Russo, to adjourn the March 13, 2024 Executive Session and reconvene in open session.

Roll Call Vote - Voting Yes: Mr. Parsons, Mr. Russo, Ms. Anderson, Ms. Biagioni-Smith and Ms. Garabedian. Unanimous Vote. Motion carried 5-0.

### **ADJOURN INTO PUBLIC SESSION**

6:29 p.m., Ms. Garabedian reconvened the Regular March 13, 2024 School Committee meeting.

Ms. Garabedian announced that during the Executive Session, the School Committee approved the February 14, 2024 Executive Session meeting minutes.

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Ms. Garabedian asked all to rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **ANNOUNCEMENT**

Ms. Garabedian announced that the March 13, 2024 Regular School Committee meeting will be televised and recorded and may be viewed live on Comcast Channel 22, Verizon Channel 34, or YouTube.com/TewksburyTV. Under the Open Meeting Law, the public is permitted to make an audio or video recording of an open session at a public meeting. Ms. Garabedian asked if anyone in the audience was recording tonight's meeting to please identify themselves. No one was recording the meeting.

### **RECOGNITIONS**

#### **TMHS Wrestling Team Division 3 State Champions**

Ron Drouin, Athletic Director, reported that the TMHS Wrestling Team is second to none. They are the Massachusetts Dual Meet State Champions, Division 3 North Sectional Champions, and the Massachusetts Division 3 State Champions. This is the first time the TMHS Wrestling Team has won a Conference since 1989. On behalf of the School Committee, Mr. Russo read and presented the Wrestling team members with a Proclamation of Recognition.

#### **Division 3 State Championship: Jack Lightfoot, Nicky Desisto, Ben Barrasso**

Three members of the TMHS Wrestling team won individual titles. Nicky Desisto is the 113 weight class 2024 Division 3 State Champion; Ben Barrasso is the 120 weight class 2024 Division 3 State Champion; and Jack Lightfoot is the 106 weight class 2024 Division 3 State Champion. On behalf of the School Committee, Ms. Biagioni-Smith read and presented Nicky DeSisto, Ben Barrasso, and Jack Lightfoot with Proclamations of Recognition for their individual Division 3 State Championship wins.

#### **Division 3 Head Wrestling Coach of the Year: Steven Kasprzak**

Mr. Drouin introduced Steven Kasprzak, TMHS Head Wrestling Coach. Coach Kasprzak was named Division 3 State Wrestling Coach of the Year. On behalf of the School Committee, Ms. Anderson read and presented Coach Kasprzak with a Proclamation of Recognition.

#### **MIAA Division 4 Indoor Track & Field Championship 2024 Varsity Boys Shot Put: Colby Mengata**

Mr. Douin introduced Colby Mengata, a member of the TMHS Boys Varsity Winter Indoor Track Team. Colby won the 2024 Division 4 State Championship in Shot Put. On behalf of the School Committee, Mr. Parsons read and presented Colby Mengata with a Proclamation of Resolution.

### **Performance of *Lost Boys* from the CES 4th Grade Drama Club**

Close to 100 4th grade members of the Center School Drama Club filled the School Committee meeting and entertained the Committee with the song *Lost Boys*. The Center Elementary School Drama Club will perform the play *Peter Pan, Jr.* on April 25th and April 26, at the Wynn Middle School Auditorium.

Ms. Garabedian announced that the Committee will take a five minute recess. Ms. Biagioni-Smith moved, seconded by Mr. Russo, to take a five minute recess to allow for our Center School friends to exit the meeting. All Aye. Unanimous Vote. Motion carried 5-0.

### **STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT**

#### **Notes from Tewksbury Memorial High School**

Rania Elouahi presented updates about the several happenings at TMHS this past month along with the month of February.

#### **Sports Updates:**

- Winter sports are coming to a close. With countless athletes qualifying for MVC meets, making playoffs, and much more.
- The TMHS Girls Varsity Basketball Team finished their season 11-11, and finished as MVC2 Co-Champs.
- The Boys Hockey Team will be having their Division 2 State Championship this Sunday at 7:30 p.m. at TD Gardens. Tickets can be bought online at TicketMaster.
- The Varsity Cheerleading Team had a season best score at the State Cheer Championships which were held on March 10th.
- Redmen Wrestling were 1st in the region, D3 State Champions, 5th at All States, and 12th in New England.
- The spring sports sign-up meeting was held on Monday, March 11th. Spring sports include tennis, track, lacrosse, baseball, and softball.

#### **Club Updates:**

- On February 16th, the half-day before vacation, the National Honor Society released their decision letters. Those who were not accepted were allowed to submit a letter of appeal to Ms. Puma.
- The NHS Induction Ceremony will be held on March 26th, in the auditorium.
- DECA state qualifiers attended the State Career Development Conference (SCDC) last week in Boston, from March 7th to March 9th. We had several national qualifiers, who will be attending ICDC in April. Additionally, 5 members of DECA will be attending the ICDC Leadership Academy, due to the leadership allocations.
- Also this week, from March 6th through March 8th, the Student Council attended the MASC State Conference, where they learned new leadership skills and attended several workshops to better the Student Council.
- Social Host Night for Junior Prom was held on February 6th.
- Tickets for Junior Prom are currently being sold during lunch and will be available until this Friday, March 15th.
- Moreover, Junior Prom will be held on April 11th at the Blue Ocean Event Center in Salisbury, MA.
- Yesterday, the TMHS Class of 2025 held a 3v3 basketball tournament yesterday and raised over \$250 dollars for our Class.
- TMHS Junior Classical League is hosting a fundraiser from March 6th to March 14th to dress a teacher up as Julius Caesar and subsequently raise money for their Club.
- The Interact Club held their second Blood Drive of the year on March 1st.

- The Math Team had a great run, breaking 60 points this season and having a terrific final meet of the season at Chelmsford High School.

**Miscellaneous:**

- AP French, Spanish, French and Spanish 4, will be attending the Museum of Fine Arts on March 28th.
- The Guidance Office is hosting 3 college tours. SNHU will be on March 26th, Endicott College will be on April second, and Worcester State University on April 9th.
- Lastly, only 30 copies remain of the Class of 2024's yearbook.

**PRESENTATIONS**

**AlphaBEST Education**

Adriane DiPasquale, Regional Director and Cheryl Catanzano, Area Manager, addressed the School Committee presenting an overview of AlphaBEST's programs and offerings for students and families relating that there are 259 students enrolled. Next year, AlphaBEST will be offering TPS staff daycare during the school day for toddlers. Adriane and Cheryl presented a look at AlphaBEST's 2024 summer program and offering. At this time, there is a waitlist but they are working on hiring additional staff. There will be employment opportunities for Tewksbury students; they will get the information to the high school. Adriane and Cheryl responded to questions and comments from the School Committee members.

Ms. Garabedian asked for a motion to move agenda item, Use of the North Street School, up to this portion of the meeting. Ms. Biagioni-Smith moved, seconded by Ms. Anderson, to move Old Business, item #17a, Use of the North Street School, up on the agenda. All Aye. Unanimous Vote. Motion carried 5-0.

**Discussion Regarding Use of the North Street School**

The School Committee discussed turning the North Street School over to the town. Ms. Garabedian asked Ms. Regan and Mr. Libby for their thoughts and if the district had any purpose for use of the North Street. Ms. Regan does not see any future use of the school by the Tewksbury Public Schools. Mr. Libby added that there is no need to keep heat and water on in the school although, like the Trahan School, there would still be electricity for the alarm system to be functional. He reported that he did not account for any costs in the budget for the North Street School.

Ms. Garabedian opened for questions and comments from the School Committee members. Mr. Russo supports the decision to turn the building over to the town. Ms. Garabedian is in favor of taking this topic to the Select Board and having the topic come to Town Meeting.

Mr. Russo moved, seconded by Ms. Biagioni-Smith, to relinquish the North Street School to the Town of Tewksbury and to be voted on at the Annual Town Meeting. All Aye. Unanimous Vote. Motion carried 5-0.

**CITIZEN'S FORUM**

Ms. Garabedian asked if there was anyone in the audience that wished to speak on anything on the agenda and if so to please state their name, address, and the specific agenda item that they would like to speak on this evening. Keith Anderson, 82 Pleasant Street, Tewksbury: Mr. Anderson addressed the School Committee regarding the future of the North Street School. Ms. Regan will schedule a meeting to meet with Mr. Anderson to discuss this and his other concerns.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Ms. Anderson moved to approve the February 14, 2024 Regular School Committee meeting minutes, seconded by Ms. Biagioni-Smith. All Aye. Unanimous vote. Motion carried 5-0.

### **SUBMISSION OF PAYMENT OF BILLS**

Ms. Anderson moved, seconded by Ms. Biagioni-Smith, to approve the payroll period ending February 15, 2024, to be approved and certified in the amount and categories as shown, \$1,607,568.25. Roll Call Vote - Voting Yes: Mr. Parsons, Mr. Russo, Ms. Anderson, Ms. Biagioni-Smith and Ms. Garabedian. Unanimous Vote. Motion carried 5-0.

Ms. Anderson moved, seconded by Ms. Biagioni-Smith, to approve the payroll period ending February 29, 2024, to be approved and certified in the amount and categories as shown, \$1,638,056.94. Roll Call Vote - Voting Yes: Mr. Parsons, Mr. Russo, Ms. Anderson, Ms. Biagioni-Smith and Ms. Garabedian. Unanimous Vote. Motion carried 5-0.

### **SUPERINTENDENT & STAFF REPORTS**

#### **Superintendent's Report**

Ms. Regan presented an update on the items on the Consent Agenda: Care Solace; Wynn Middle School grant for a Cell Phone Pilot Program; and the announcement of the retirement of Rick Pelletier, Director of Student Services. She reported that Candace Tharrett will step-up in his position for the remainder of the school year. Lori McDermott will be moving on to the Billerica Public Schools as the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction. The district has assembled an Interview Committee for the position of Assistant Superintendent at TPS; she will bring the selected candidate to the April meeting. Ms. Regan reported that the schools have planned safe activities on April 8th for the total solar eclipse. The PACs have bought eclipse glasses for students. Ms. Regan will give an update on the grant for the Wynn Middle School's Cell Phone Pilot at the April meeting.

#### **Assistant Superintendent's Report**

Ms. McDermott gave an update on today's half-day workshop for Professional Development. The focus was primarily on building-based training on the new IEP for all staff and grades K-2 received building-based training in GEO. Ms. McDermott gave a *shout-out* to Mary Groux and Lauren Tierney as they each received a course voucher from Merrimack College for supervising student teachers. She reported that March is National Reading month and we have been celebrating across the district. Many of us had the opportunity to read in classrooms. The Standard Based Report Cards, grades 1-4, will be available on April 1st in Aspen. MCAS is coming; grade 10 will be taking the ELA MCAS on March 26th and March 27th and the Ryan and Wynn Schools will begin MCAS testing during the first couple weeks in April. She reminded families to check the MCAS schedule.

#### **Business Manager's Report**

Mr. Libby responded to a question from Ms. Biagioni-Smith, reporting that the cost for Care Solace is \$20,000 for the three year contract. Ms. Regan added that there is no cost to families or staff for using Care Solace. In response to a question from Ms. Anderson, Mr. Libby gave a brief update on the issue with the Bus App on Early Release days. He reported that the transportation company thought they fixed the Early Release day issue however it has not been fixed. He will follow-up on the issue.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Ms. Garabedian asked if any member had questions and/or comments on any item on the Consent Agenda. Seeing none, she asked for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Mr. Russo moved, seconded by Ms. Biagioni-Smith, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. All Aye. Unanimous vote. Motion carried 5-0.

### **Correspondence**

- a. March 13, 2024 Teacher Workshop/PD Half-day
- b. Care Solace Usage Update

- c. Wynn Cell Phone Grant Update
- d. Merrimack College Supervising Practitioner Course Vouchers

#### **Personnel Items**

**New Hires** - Michael Rasmussen, part-time 12 month Custodian (Doucette Field House) effective February 26, 2024

**Reappointments** - None

**Retirements** - Elaine Sinclair, Case Manager at the Wynn Middle School, effective June 30, 2024;  
Richard Pelletier, Director of Student Services, effective April 30, 2024 **Transfers** - None

**Appendix B 2023-2024 Co-Curricular Activities** - None

**Appendix B TMHS Athletics** - None

**Acceptance of Donations** - None

**Raffles** - None

#### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

##### **Tewksbury SEPAC**

Ms. Biagioni-Smith reported the SEPAC meeting on the 21st will be part Business Meeting and a part Candidate Forum to meet the candidates running for the School Committee. She reports that the TSEPAC recently met with the district administration to discuss some ongoing topics of concerns. Mr. Parsons took a moment to thank the TSEPAC membership for the time he served as a School Committee representative on the PAC.

##### **Wellness Advisory Committee**

Mr. Russo reported that the next Wellness Advisory Committee meeting will be held on April 3, 2024.

##### **Policy Sub-Committee**

Ms. Anderson reported that the Policy Sub-Committee met last Friday relating they are working on the Homework policy. The next meeting will be held on March 22nd and they will review the Wellness policy.

#### **POLICY CHANGES, PROPOSALS, AND ADOPTIONS**

None

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

##### **Use of the North Street School**

Moved up on the agenda.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

##### **Student Opportunity Act (SOA)**

Mr. Regan reported that the Student Opportunity Act became a priority for districts during the pandemic. The focus of the SOA is on learning acceleration and recovery for all students. Ms. McDermott addressed the Committee and highlighted the main points of the district's SOA plan relating that this does require a vote from the School Committee. The plan is based on identifying the key evidenced based programs the district will focus on and the resources the district plans to allocate from any funding source over the next three years to highlight and support high quality implementation of the program. The plan highlights a subset of

the district's overall initiatives and it is focused on rapidly improving outcomes from student groups who are experiencing the greatest disparities. She presented an overview of the district's three year Student Opportunity Act plan. Ms. McDermott responded to questions and comments from the School Committee members.

Mr. Russo moved, seconded by Mr. Parsons, to approve the Student Opportunity Act as presented. All Aye. Unanimous Vote. Motion carried 5-0. Ms. McDermott will keep the Committee updated on the status of the SOA.

#### **2024 Superintendent's Evaluation Timeline**

Ms. Garabedian reported that the Committee received a copy of the 2024 Superintendent's Evaluation Timeline. During the time period of June 24-July 2nd, Ms. Regan will share her progress report and self assessment with the Committee members. July 10th, the School Committee members will submit their evaluation to the Chair. The Superintendent's Evaluation summary will be submitted and presented at the July School Committee meeting.

#### **Re-establish Long Range School Space Planning Committee**

Ms. Regan reported that the time has come to address the needs of our school facilities; we have aging schools in need of repairs. We need to develop a plan to move forward with the two elementary schools as well as the Ryan School and the Wynn Middle School. She asked that the School Committee vote on sending a letter to the Select Board asking for a discussion to re-establish the Long Range School Space Planning Committee. The district would then like to reach out to stakeholders and get the community to weigh-in.

Mr. Russo moved, seconded by Ms. Biagioni-Smith, to send a letter to the Select Board requesting a discussion to re-establish the Long Range School Space Planning Committee. All Aye. Unanimous Vote. Motion carried 5-0.

Ms. Regan reported that we had a last minute request from the Robotics Team to attend two upcoming competitions, one is out-of-state to Durham. She asked that the School Committee consider approving the request. Ms. Biagioni-Smith moved, seconded by Mr. Russo, to allow the Robotics Team to attend an out-of-state competition in New Hampshire. All Aye. Unanimous Vote. Motion carried 5-0.

#### **SCHOOL COMMITTEE MATTERS OF INTEREST**

Ms. Garabedian reported that the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent will be attending the MASS Annual Meeting on July 17th. Due to the scheduling conflict, she asked the Committee if we could move the July 17th meeting to July 24th. The Committee members were in agreement to move the meeting to July 24th.

Ms. Garabedian and the School Committee members took a moment to recognize Nick Parsons for his term serving on the School Committee. They presented Nick with a gift and thanked him for his service and commitment during his term. Mr. Parsons read a thank you to staff, the district administration, Central Office, the Town Officials and his family and friends.

Ms. Garabedian reminded the community that nominations for the Krissy Polimeno Outstanding Educator Award and the Ginsburg Family Award are due by April 12th. She announced that she and Mr. Russo will be visiting the Wynn School on Friday shadowing a team of four teachers. Ms. Biagioni-Smith thanked Mr. DiPrima for taking the Drama Club to New York City. Mr. Russo thanked the Center School staff for the opportunity to read during Read Across America Week.

**FUTURE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING DATES**

April 10th: Regular Mtg; May 1st: Regular Meeting

May 6th: Annual Town Mtg & May 8th: Special Town Meeting/Annual Town Mtg Reconvened (School Committee will be in attendance); May 22nd: Regular Meeting

**2024 FUTURE SUB-COMMITTEE & ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING DATES**

TSEPAC Basic Rights Workshop: February 15th & Business Meeting on March 21st;

Wellness Advisory Committee: April 3rd; Policy Sub-Committee: March 8th.

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 8:53 p.m., Ms. Garabedian adjourned the March 13, 2024 Regular School Committee meeting with a motion from RR/KA. Unanimous vote. Motion carried 5-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gail Johnson, Recording Secretary

List of documents and exhibits used (GL c.30A, sect 22(a)):

<b>AGENDA ITEM #</b>	<b>DOCUMENT</b>
1	School Committee Meeting Agenda: March 13, 2024
2	Executive Session Agenda: March 13, 2024
4	FY25 Budget Public Hearing Presentation
10	Presentations: AlphaBEST
12	Minutes: February 14, 2024
13	Submission Of Payment Of Bills: February 15, 2024; February 29, 2024
15	Consent Agenda: Correspondence; Personnel Items
18	Old Business: Use of the North Street School
19	New Business: Student Opportunity Act (SOA); 2024 Superintendent Evaluation Timeline; Re-establish Long Range School Space Planning Committee